

FY2023 TxDOT Traffic Safety RFP Frequently Asked Questions - STEP

| Q # | Question | Answer |
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| 1) | Is the proposal training webinar going to be posted online? What about the STEP Power Point Presentation? | Yes, the training sessions have been recorded and the STEP Power Point Presentation (PDF) can be accessed through the eGrants RFP page: https://www.txdot.gov/apps/eGrants/eGrantsHelp/rfp.html |
| 2) | When I log into eGrants and click on “View Proposals” there are several options. They are labeled “General-”, “STEP Comprehensive-”, and “STEP CMV-”. All have the same due date and grant period. What is the difference between these options? | General Proposal - General Traffic Safety grants are non-enforcement projects which address any of the 14 highway safety program areas. Organizations eligible for General traffic safety grants include state and local governments, educational institutions, and non-profit organizations. STEP Proposal - Selective Traffic Enforcement Program (STEP) grants pay for overtime activities by law enforcement to reduce the incidence of speeding, driving while intoxicated, failure to use occupant restraint systems, intersection traffic control violations, and enforcement of state and local ordinances on cellular and texting devices. Only state and local law enforcement agencies and inter-governmental coordination entities for law enforcement efforts (i.e., COGs) are eligible for STEP grants. Organizations are allowed one STEP Comprehensive and one STEP CMV proposal. Please refer to the STEP RFP: https://www.txdot.gov/apps/eGrants/eGrantsHelp/rfp.html |
| 3) | Can we apply for STEP yearlong and STEP CMV program all in the same proposal? Can we apply for a STEP Comprehensive and a STEP CMV proposals in the same year? | The STEP Comprehensive and STEP CMV cannot be combined into the same proposal. They are two separate proposals. Every Organization can apply for one STEP Comprehensive and one STEP CMV proposal. Any agency can have both grants up to the maximum posted budget amount for each. Please refer to the STEP RFP: https://www.txdot.gov/apps/eGrants/eGrantsHelp/rfp.html |
| 4) | Where do I locate the list for capped available funds for STEP? | Budget for all STEP Agencies are listed in the STEP RFP. Please refer to the STEP RFP: https://www.txdot.gov/apps/eGrants/eGrantsHelp/rfp.html |
| 5) | I am a new agency and I don't see my agency on the STEP RFP Budget list. How much am I available to receive for funding? | Agencies new to STEP in FY 2022 should look at the STEP budget document, which is Attachment A of the STEP RFP. If an agency is listed on the budget sheet, that agency can qualify for up to the amount shown for STEP-COMP or STEP-CMV enforcement, or both. However, if an agency is not listed on the budget sheet, or is listed but one of the CMV/COMP boxes is blank, the agency can qualify for up to \$12,000 in that funding area. First- and second-year agencies appearing on the list are capped at \$50,000 for the first two years in STEP. Please refer to the STEP RFP: https://www.txdot.gov/apps/eGrants/eGrantsHelp/rfp.html |

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| 6) | Can we still get the funding for STEP CMV if we do not have enforcement officers or training for commercial motor vehicles? Is that a requirement? | Yes. If your agency is not listed on the budget sheet, or is listed but the CMV box is blank, your agency can still receive up to \$12,000 in funding for CMV. CMV grants through TxDOT are for enforcement of traffic laws only. Officers working CMV under this grant should not attempt to weigh or inspect CMVs in any way. Training and funding for that type of enforcement is available through the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration. TCOLE-certified training for enforcement specific to the CMV grant can be obtained free-of-charge by contacting larry.krantz@txdot.gov Please refer to the STEP RFP: https://www.txdot.gov/apps/eGrants/eGrantsHelp/rfp.html |
| 7) | In the 2022 RFP under the CMV grant section, it specifically states officers may not review driver logs? Why were driver logs singled out? | Officers working STEP with 402 funds, which is the funding source, may not weigh or inspect or check log books. That's a different type of commercial vehicle enforcement grant. |
| 8) | Are I.S.D. Police Departments eligible to apply for STEP grants? | Yes, the RFP describes organizations eligible for STEP funds include the Texas Department of Public Safety, Sheriff's Offices, Constable's Offices, local Police Departments, and Inter-Governmental Coordination Entities for Law Enforcement Efforts; i.e. COGs. Please refer to the STEP RFP: https://www.txdot.gov/apps/eGrants/eGrantsHelp/rfp.html |
| 9) | What if I want a CIOT or IDM grant? | Do not submit a proposal for CIOT and IDM Projects. These projects will be solicited at a later time. For more information on these types of grants please contact STEP Program Manager, Larry Krantz at larry.krantz@txdot.gov |
| 10) | Is it allowable to apply for a STEP grant to pay for a new regular time officer position rather than existing officers overtime dollars? I am talking about creating a new full-time position and the officer would be devoted solely to STEP goals. | If you increase your agency Full Time Employees (FTEs) and create a brand-new position, this would be acceptable, provided all current FTEs are filled and maintained. |
| 11) | Our Lieutenants are salaried employees; will we have to get authorization for them to be able to receive the reimbursed funding from the grant? | It depends on how their overtime is handled. They may not, for example, earn comp time while working overtime to conduct STEP enforcement. |
| 12) | Is there a limit on the number of Enforcement Zones? | Yes. Every agency should have at least two zones, but most will not qualify for more than two zones based on the number of enforcement hours on their grant. There is a complete description of the formula used to determine the number of zones an agency qualifies for in the FY 2022 STEP RFP document. Please refer to the STEP RFP: https://www.txdot.gov/apps/eGrants/eGrantsHelp/rfp.html |

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| 13) | <p>Can enforcement zones be any shape that contains KA crashes and is no larger than 4 square miles?</p> <p>If we describe the enforcement zone and give a start and end point for each, is that acceptable?</p> | <p>Your Enforcement Zones should be shaped in such a way as to maximize your ability to patrol the area consistently and effectively. There are complete instructions in both the STEP RFP and the in the proposal itself on the Enforcement Zone/Operational Plan page. A detailed narrative of the zone boundaries, either start-and-end points on linear zones, or on the roadways bounding the square-mile zones.</p> <p>Please refer to the STEP RFP: https://www.txdot.gov/apps/eGrants/eGrantsHelp/rfp.html</p> |
| 14) | <p>As a county, we have limited jurisdiction over the areas on the maps provided that have the highest rates of crashes. Should we provide a map of what streets/roads we have jurisdiction over?</p> <p>Will we be penalized if our enforcement zones do not include those places with the highest crashes due to the limited jurisdiction?</p> | <p>Only the crashes that occurred in your jurisdiction will be used in creating your crash benchmarks. If you are a county-level enforcement agency, crashes that occur inside city limits in your county do not count against you, nor do crashes that happen in the county count against any city in that county. Study your maps carefully. If there are no obvious areas in your jurisdiction where crashes occur, then you may not be a good candidate for STEP.</p> |
| 15) | <p>If my agency qualifies for a certain amount of funding for CMV enforcement, do I need to separate that enforcement activity from the regular enforcement grant activity?</p> <p>If so, do the officers need to work CMV separately from the regular enforcement when they work the zones or can they work both at the same time?</p> | <p>Yes, STEP-CMV grants and STEP-COMP grants have different performance measures, so they cannot be combined under one grant. STEP-COMP activities should be recorded and reported on that grant's corresponding PRs and RFRs, and same for CMV. If you have both grants, you will file two PRs and RFRs each month, one for each grant.</p> |
| 16) | <p>My Department does not currently have an instrument such as a written warning system. Under our current procedures, warnings are verbal; will our agency have to implement a written citizen contact/warning instrument?</p> | <p>The new "documented vehicle-stops-per-hour" system requires that all stops made during STEP enforcement be documented in writing by issuing a written warning or a citation, or by making an arrest. Since issuing a written warning is optional in this system, there is no requirement that any agency develop that specific capability. However, that agency's only options when making a documented vehicle stop on STEP will be to issue a citation or make an arrest.</p> |
| 17) | <p>Will there be a set number of PI&E events in 2021?</p> | <p>There is not a set maximum number, but there is a minimum number: the requirements are a=5; b=5; c=2.</p> <p>Ideally, those events would correspond with holiday enforcement mobilizations outlined in the grant, but that is not a specific requirement.</p> |
| 18) | <p>If each Officer has a different overtime hourly rate while working STEP, do we use a median rate for the budget?</p> | <p>Yes, you would use a median rate or a weighted average if there are multiple ranks planning to work.</p> |

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| 19) | Does TxDOT have Match guidelines? | <p>Please refer to the most current Match Guidelines document located on the eGrants Help page. For STEP, we prefer that agencies consider using the following match options in the following order to maximize funds and minimize match-related risk: fringe benefits, administrative time, mileage. Click the link below for more information.</p> <p>https://www.txdot.gov/apps/eGrants/eGrantsHelp/index.html</p> |
| 20) | Can court time for officers on STEP violations, during their regular time be used as match? Is this put under Administrative Duties time? | <p>Court time is shown under other miscellaneous (Category 700). The agency must study their past arrests/citations to determine what percentage do go to court and figure an average of how many hours each arrest or citation takes. They would then enter a formula into the proposed budget to show that. While court time can be used as match, there are simpler ways for agencies to develop and document match.</p> <p>See Question 19.</p> |
| 21) | Can costs incurred for training or conferences be considered for reimbursement and/or used as match on STEP grants? | <p>Yes, but the training and conferences will need to be approved by TxDOT prior to grant execution. Be prepared to provide a brief justification for how the training and/or conference will enhance your agency's enforcement efforts. Keep in mind also that any out-of-state travel must also be approved in advance by submitting a supplemental report once the grant is executed.</p> |
| 22) | Where can I find the maps and crash data for my agency? | <p>Links to everything an agency needs to complete a STEP grant proposal can be found here:</p> <p>https://buckleuptexas.com/step-resources/</p> |
| 23) | What is the hourly rate being used for Law enforcement for match purposes? | <p>TxDOT does not have an average hourly rate of pay for law enforcement officers. The proposing agency would establish that rate and will need to justify how it was determined.</p> |
| 24) | <p>If we already have an established approved indirect cost rate that is less than 10%, do we still have to provide supporting documentation?</p> <p>If we have never had an approved indirect cost rate and choose the 10% indirect cost rate, do we have to provide any supporting documentation?</p> | <p>Yes; If your agency has a current indirect cost rate that is approved annually by your cognizant agency, then you must use this rate and attach the supporting documentation to the proposal even if it is less than 10%. The rate must be auditable.</p> <p>If an agency has never had an approved indirect cost rate, no supporting documentation is required to claim the standard 10% indirect cost rate.</p> |
| 25) | Can you please provide clarification on what is an acceptable cognizant agency? | <p>Cognizant agency for indirect costs means the agency responsible for reviewing and approving the governmental unit's indirect cost rate(s).</p> |

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| 26) | Can we choose to just use a portion of our approved indirect cost rate (i.e. 20% of a 30% rate) in our proposal and use the difference (i.e. the remaining 10%) as match? | Yes, the difference can be claimed as match in the proposal. |
| 27) | Are subgrantees subject to GSA travel guidelines for hotel costs? | Yes; TxDOT reimbursement follows the hotel and per diem rates established by GSA. |
| 28) | What is the file size limit for attachments? | <p>The file size limit is 4MB per attachment. eGrants will not accept attachments over 4MB. You will receive an error message if the file size is too big.</p> <p>We recommend scanning attachments as black & white and low resolution. You can also split large attachments up into smaller attachments less than 4MB.</p> |
| 29) | Is there an example of the daily activity (time & effort) report on eGrants? | <p>Yes, there are several examples of STEP Daily Activity Reports on the eGrants help page under "STEP Tool Box"</p> <p>https://www.txdot.gov/apps/eGrants/eGrantsHelp/index.html</p> |
| 30) | Can you please provide a list of approved projects, proposals and budgets from previous years? | <p>TxDOT posts the current years approved project list and current Highway Safety Plan on eGrantsHelp. Previous year approved projects are reported in the Annual report also located on eGrantsHelp:</p> <p>https://www.txdot.gov/apps/eGrants/eGrantsHelp/index.html</p> |